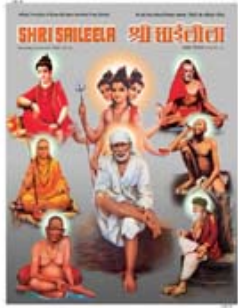




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Homepage



श्रद्धा

सबुटी

SHRI SAIBABA SANSTHAN TRUST, SHIRDI



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SHRI DATTA AVADHOOT

Reference of Atri *Rishi* and *Mata* Anusuya is in many instances, specially in Rigveda, in this context the triad *Swaroop* signifies the conglomeration of Sun (*Surya*), Fire (*Agni*) and Wind (*Vayu*).

In Tripura Rahasya, Shandilya Upanishad, Markandeya Puran, Padma Puran, the divinity of Dattatreya is gracefully enumerated.

The progeny of Atri *Rishi* and Anusuya *Mata* Dattatreya has been adored and revered from Vedas and Upanishads time hence as divine Incarnation

From historical proficiency *Shri* Shripad Shrivallabha, *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati, *Shri* Swami Samartha, *Shri* Sai Baba, *Shri* Manik Prabhu, *Shri* Vasudevanand Saraswati, *Shri* Gajanan Maharaj, *Shri* Gulavani Maharaj, *Shri* Shankar Maharaj, *Shri*

Pant Maharaj Balekundri are all the Incarnations of Dattatreya.

The solemn declaration of these noble ones' "***Amhi Samadhi Sthani Guptroopane Vaas Karu Aani Smaratakshani Pragat Asu (We exist at Samadhi seat latent and at appropriate time when remembered we reappear)***" such assurance has been given to the devotees. Till today the aspirants, the devotees with firm faith and pure dedication when worship and pray, they are favoured, advised, guided and gifted by illustrations and directions. This is the Blessing of *Shri* Datta. Though the Incarnations are different in forms and names yet they all are one in *Atmaswaroop* in Unity.

From Vedas and Puranas, the basic thinking rallies around the divine Dattatreya. Datta tradition, Datta *parampara*, is nothing but only Blissful gift, mercy of the Divine in sanctity to uplift humanity, the task of taking the mankind from the materialistic life towards the Supreme.

This form is a symbolic *Sadguru* form. This form is powerful, generous, kind and affectionate. This form can be seen and understood by all the noble ones' deeds in the Datta *sampradaya*.

Shri Dattatreya, the Divine Progeny of *Rishi* Atri and *Mata* Anusuya is considered as the first Incarnation.

Prabhu Datta adored as *Avatar* of forgiveness (*kshama pradhan*), pardoning nature.

Shri Dattatreya has appeared as *Avadhoot*, as *Fakir*, as *Malang* and favoured *darshan* to His devotees.

In Brahmapuran Dattatreya *Avatar* has been described as,

Bhuyo Bhutatmano Vishno Pradubrhavo Mahatmanaha

Dattatreya Iti Khyathaha Kshamaya Parya Yutaha

(The very potent of Vishnu incarnated as Dattatreya gracefully renowned for forgiveness)

Dattatreya, symbolic of grace of *Avadhoot*, a typical form with knotted hair at the head, body smeared with sacred ash (*bhasma*), the rudraksh *mala* around the neck, the humble begging for attitude domain, and moving from place to place with one solemn intention of uplifting humanity and mankind. The basic fundamental core of Dattatreya *Avatar*; the axiom of Dattatreya *sampradaya* is *jagkalyan* and *bhaktoddhar*.

Datta *Avatar* is purely for the redemption of mankind. The *Avatar* is of *jnana* (wisdom), purity, penance, concentration of mind and dedicated attitude. The *Avatar* is fundamental of surrendering self, uplifting selflessness and devotion of the eternal divinity.

Datta *Avatar* can also be summarised as,

Sagun Nirgun Eku Govindu.....

The *Avatar* of three modes fused in grace of divinity, form and formless serenity, the ultimate Govinda, the endless eternal cosmic blissful entity.

Shri Vasudevanand Saraswati in 'Dattatreya Shodasha Avatar' *Pothi*, a religious text, has described *Bhagavan* Dattatreya's 16 *Avatars* in adoration as,

1. Yogiraj, 2. Atrivarad, 3. Dattatreya, 4. Kalagnishama, 5. Yogijana Vallabha, 6. Leela Vishwambhar, 7. Sidhharaj, 8. Jnan Sagar, 9. Vishwambhar-avadhoot, 10. Mayamuk-tavadhoot, 11. Adi Guru, 12. Shivroop, 13. Devdevavatar, 14. Digambar, 15. Shyamkamallochan, 16. Mayamukt-avadhoot (2nd time appearance – Reincarnation of Mayamuktavadhoot)

Datta *Mahaprabhu* took these *Avatars* only to uplift humanity. In doing so, *Prabhu* has adopted or coopted 24 *Gunas*.

Jo Jayacha Ghetala Guna

The Datta *Mahaprabhu* perceived each one of the *gunas*. 1. *Prithvi* (Earth) - for forgiveness, pardon 2. *Pavan* (Wind) - for void of desire 3. *Vyom* (Sky) - for equinamity 4. *Jal / Udak* (Water) - for purity 5. *Agni* (Fire) - for splendour, radiance 6. *Chandrama* (Moon) - for coolness 7. *Surya* (Sun) - for brilliance and grace 8. *Kapot* (Pigeon) - for peace 9. *Ajgar* (Huge Serpent) - for dullness, sluggishness 10. *Samudra* (Sea/Ocean) - for vastness 11. *Patang* (Moth) - for endless, limitless, love, attachment 12. *Bhrung* (Large Black Bee) - for libertine, dissolute 13. *Matang/Gaj* (Elephant) - for the best of it's kind, never gets disturbed, set on, moves ahead firmly 14. *Madhumashi* (Honey Bee) - for togetherness, works non-stop to collect honey from flowers and tendency to store 15. *Mrug* (Deer) - for agile, tendency to seek hunt, search, chase 16. *Matsya* (Fish) - for the mankind 17. *Pingala Veshya* (A Prostitute, named Pingala) - for virtuous 18. *Titavi* (Lapwing) - for effort 19. *Balak* (Child) - for purity, ready to accept and for obedience 20. *Kumari* (Unmarried Lady) - for humbleness, assurance 21. *Sarpa* (Serpent) - for the task of guarding, *vritti* of watch and guard 22. *Sharkar* (The One Who makes arrow) - for the concentration and skill, aiming 23. *Kumbhareen* (Wasp) - for the skill, the arranging everything 24. *Koli* (Fisherman) - for the patience, watchful

The solemn reason to adopt them all as *Guru* has a definite meaning. It is apparent that all the entities as such intended to adore are all of Universe. Right from *Prithvi* to *Koli*, indicating the essence of divinity superfluous in them; so each and everyone so choosen are to be revered. The Universal entities are the creation of the Supreme.

Datta *Mahaprabhu* showed to the *Vishva*, the graceful abundance in these forms are worth of adoration and to be honoured and worshipped. Thus, each has it's potential content to be cognised and prayed.

In 'Shri Guru Charitra' initial cantos deal with narration of *Shri* Dattatreya and further the noble deeds of *Shri* Shripad Shrivallabha and *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati is accounted.

In 'Shri Guru Leelamrut' the graceful deeds of Akkalkot *Swami Samartha* is enumerated at the later cantos. *Shri* Datta *Daivat* a *Vishnu*roop only, to look after the mankind and to protect them.

Datta *sampradaya's* historical reference is narrated as, for *lokkalyan*, *Shri* Vishnu took birth in the hermitage of *Shri* Atri *Rishi* as Vishnudatta. Vishnudatta called and fondled readdressing His Brahma and Mahesh brotheren. Then appeared as *Trimoorti* Datta in the Universe. Vishnudatta in Andhra Pradesh, at Pithapur place, favoured a pious couple, when he was given alms.

"*Aai tujhya manachi talamal shant hoyeel; majhyasarakha dnyani putra poti yava, hich na tujhi ichcha; tar tujhya poti janma gheyeen* (Mother, you crave for a son, *jnani* like Me; yes, I will be a progeny for you, *Mata*)."² Thus He incarnated as *Shri* Shripad Shrivallabha.

The divine *Brahmachari* at His age of sixteen imparting Vedas and Upanishads set for righteous pilgrimage and at the bank of Krishna river at Kuravpur much later appeared as *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati, the Incarnation of Datta.

The symbolic name '*Avadhoot*' is adored to the graceful Datta *Mahaprabhu*. One with *Jatajoot*, *bhasma* smeared body and *Rudrakshmala* around the neck, *Vishwasanchari* (Universal Wanderer), *Avinashi* (Eternal), the *Avatar* of worthy, wisdom and righteous knowledge. The *Avatar* progressed and propagated overwhelmingly and remained *shashwat* (permanent).

The prominent names of *Satpurushas* *Shri* Manik Prabhu (Humanabad), *Shri* *Swami Samartha* (Akkalkot), *Shri* Sai Baba of Shirdi, *Shri* Gajanan *Maharaj* of Shegaon, *Shri* Vasudevanand Saraswati, *Shri* Shankar *Maharaj* are the symbolic of Datta *Avatar* in recent years of time span of 100-150 years. They continued the lineage of the *Avatar*.

The great ones who reached the graceful height of Datta *Bhakta* and as Datta Incarnation are Janardan *Swami*, Eknath *Maharaj*, Gorakhnath, Govind Prabhu, Chakradhar *Swami*, Dasopant, Mahipati,

Chidambar Dixit, Niranjan Raghunath, Narayan Maharaj Jalvankar, Narsinha Saraswati (Alandi), Pant Maharaj Balekundrikar, Rangavadhoot Maharaj, Gulavani Maharaj, Aaudumbar, S. Narayanananda Swami. These great noble ones did *upasana* extensively and attained the solemn height of Datta *Guru Peeth Anugraha* in sanctity.

SAGUN AND NIRGUN SANGAM

The fusion of form and formless Divinity of Dattatreya *Avatar* and the propagation of Datta *sampradaya* is solely for uplifting humanity.

Datta *sampradaya* is purely *Jnan* and *Yoga* fundamentals. The principles of righteous *pravritti* is honoured and adored. The recognition of pious devotion and the lineage of *sampradaya* is basically, the Blessing of *Shri* Narsinha Saraswati. Emerged all from *Shri Kshetra* Narasobawadi in Maharashtra. The *sampradaya* or tradition is evident and potent.

The *Satpurushas* are all potential *Yogis of Jnan* and *Bhakti*. The *Satpurushas* have progressed the devotional paths both of form and formless domain (*Sagun* and *Nirgun* paths).

The *Daivat* Dattatreya is worshipped with full devotion.

The Vedas and Upanishads denote *Krityug*, the time span of Datta *Avatar*. In *Kaliyug*, the *Avatar* has pertinent significance, as declared by *Shri Krishna*, “*Dharma Sansthanarthaya Sambhavami Yuge, Yuge.*”

In confirmation of this Incarnation took place. In the south Andhra Pradesh at Pithapur (now Vijayawada rly. station, Rajmahendri dist.), the Incarnation of *Shri Shripad Shrivallabha* solemnised in the 14th century. This noble One blessed and uplifted, rescued many many by His divinity. At Kuravpur (Raichur dist., Andhra Pradesh) completed the *Avatar*’s final obligation with firm assurance,

“*Punha Bhetu (Meet you all again).*”

In compliance, *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati took birth at Karanja (Lad Karanja, Varhad *Prant*, Maharashtra).

The *Avatar* in the time span from year 1408 to 1458, served the humanity, looked after fully the devotees and aspirants and the people.

And *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati set for pilgrimage to *Shri Shailya*, the noble One disappeared in *Kardalivan* later.

After 300 years reappeared. Everyone realised the *Avatar Purush* as *Shri Swami Samartha* of Akkalkot.

SHRI DATTA AVATAR PARAMPARA

Shri Shripad Shrivallabha as such from materialistic point of view, put an end to the *Avatar* at Kuravpur.

He had directed a *brahmin* woman to do *aradhana* and continue the *sadhana* of *Shani Pradosh vrata*. That woman without the bliss of the child left her mortal coil, not satisfied. She was born in a *brahmin* family in Karanja, Varhad with name as *Amba Bhavani* and got married to *Madhav* a *brahmin* and she gave birth to a baby boy. That Son of her is *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati only. Right from the birth the Divine Boy uttered ‘*Omkar*’ and no other syllable. The parents thought the boy is dumb only. So much so they showed the Little One to many *vaidyas* seeking treatment.

The Boy seeing the plight of His simple parents showed by sign language that He should be solemnised with thread ceremony, *upanayan*.

The parents being poor could not afford to do *upanayan* of the *Batu*.

The Boy felt distressed by the inability of the parents. He just touched an iron plate and turned it into gold; so that His parents can afford to arrange *upanayan* ceremony.

The *upanayan*, thread ceremony was done with pomp and grandeur, the *pandits* preached *mantras* to the *Batu*, looking at them the Young *Batu* started chanting all of Vedas fluently. This shocked everyone gathered there at the time of ritual begging (*bhiksha*).

Then, the Young *Batu* requested the mother, to allow Him to go on pilgrimage.

The dear mother did not agree. The *Batu* then called His mother and showed His previous *Avatar* Form of *Shri Shripad Shrivallabha*, and assured her of another progeny to her.

Then, when the son was born to her, the *Batu* set out to *Kashi* for higher learning and to attain knowledge.

In Kashi the *Batu* was trained under the care of Krishna Saraswati. He sought *sannyas diksha* from learned Krishna Saraswati. Thus the name Narasinha Saraswati was given to Him.

In Kashi many got *anugraha* from *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati. *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati then set on pilgrimage moved from Nagjhari, Parali Vajjanath and came to Aaudumber, Bhilvad, Sangli in Maharashtra. He was welcomed by *yoginis* at Narasobawadi. Here at the bank of Krishna He stayed for 12 years and on *Gurudwadashi* day He disappeared from Narasobawadi.

He appeared in Gangapur (Karnataka) and settled there. *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati showed mercy on many; His mission of uplifting the poor, downtrodden, helpless continued with His noble deeds and timely favours and granting boons.

The fundamental task and mission of *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati was redemption of mankind. When the devotees and his mother asked Him, "Where and when we can see You again ?" *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati said, "Light up the lamp ! Then, with pure mind and firm faith look at this wall ! You will see Me. You will get *Sadguru darshan (Ishwari darshan)*." The *Guru* preaching was simple, "Chant with compassion, remember Us, We will appear."

"Anthakaranpurvak Smaran Kelyas Amhi Pragatu (With utmost devotion call Me, I will appear)."

Shri Narasinha Saraswati's three main seats of Divinity are :-

Aaudumber - The seat of Knowledge

Wadi - The Seat of Penance

Gangapur - The Seat of Righteousness

The fame of *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati spread all over. The people started pouring into to have divine *darshan* of the great one.

Shri Narasinha Saraswati then decided to be latent in the human form. Though not seen in entity, the grace was felt and experienced by dedication with pure attitude. *Shri* Narasinha Saraswati solemnly assured for all the devotees,

"I will be in Gangapur in permanance to Bless you all. I have kept My Padukas here with a notion of the Padukas are symbolic of My relevence and assurance, the Padukas vouch for Me."

Shri Narasinha Saraswati then proceeded to Kardalivan from Gangapur, appeared as *Swami Samartha* in Akkalkot after a time period of three hundred years. The solemn assurance of *Swami Samartha* is ***"Bhioo Nakos; Smaratakshanich Mee Tujhya Pathishi (Fear not; I am always nearby you, side by you)."***

(Contd.)

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शुद्धा

सबुटी

SHRI SAIBABA SANSTHAN TRUST, SHIRDI



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SaiLeela Nov-Dec2005

The Publication of 'Shri Sai Satcharita'

completes

75 years

Shri Sai Satcharita, the magnum opus, a composition of 9,308 verses (*ovis*) on the life and teachings of the venerable Shirdi Saint, Shri Sai Baba, penned in Marathi by late Govind Raghunath Dabholkar (Hemadpant) with the Blessings of Shri Sai Baba, completes 75 years on November 26.



The 'Shri Sai Satcharita', which is revered and read by crores of Sai devotees, was styled in the verse form based on the popular Eknathi Bhagwat. The 'Charita' contains 53 chapters, which provides an interesting mix of Baba's advent in Shirdi, His miracles (*leelas*), His teachings, etc. The 'charita' is another of Baba's *leelas*, because not only has it slaked the thirst of His innumerable devotees by providing them succour for their material and spiritual growth, but has proved to be a fountain of inspiration for other literary works on Sai *Maharaj*. Innumerable devotees have penned books inspired by the 'Shri Sai Satcharita'. Many musical composition and films have been based on the 'Charita' and the latest enterprise is Ramanand Sagar's mega serial on Sai Baba.

The story behind the writing of the 'Shri Sai Satcharita' is as follows.....

Kakasaheb Dixit and *Nanasaheb* Chandorkar were staunch devotees of Baba and both of them were urging *Annasaheb* Dabholkar to visit Shirdi for Baba's *darshan*. Dabholkar promised, he would; but then an incident happened, which made him change his mind. Dabholkar was in Lonavala with his friend, when the friend's son fell ill. The family tried various remedies, yet the fever would not abate. Even the friend's *Guru* was called, who sat by the son's bedside, yet they could not save the son. Dabholkar started pondering, 'Is there any point in having a *Guru*, when he cannot do anything for us? Why should I go to Shirdi?'

But, then in 1910, *Nanasaheb*, who was a *Prant* Officer, was going on a tour to Bassein. From Thane he came to Dadar and was waiting for a train to Bassein. But, when Baba wants to pull 'His sparrow', He creates means and methods for them to reach Him.

This was one such *leela* of His, when a Bandra local pulled in the station. *Nanasaheb* sat in it and reached Bandra, sent a message for Dabholkar and once again convinced him to go to Shirdi.

Dabholkar, hearing *Nanasaheb*'s point of view, decided to go to Shirdi the same evening. He packed his luggage and started to go to Dadar to catch the train for Manmad. Baba again guided him through a Muslim, who entered the train just before it pulled out of the station and seeing Dabholkar's luggage, enquired, where he was heading. On hearing Dabholkar's plan, he suggested that he should go to Boribunder (Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus) instead of Dadar, as Manmad Mail was not going to halt at Dadar. By following this suggestion Dabholkar was able to reach Shirdi at about 9 a.m. the next day. He felt that if he had missed the train and had delayed reaching Shirdi, doubts would have again assailed him.

When he reached Shirdi, *Kakasaheb* was waiting for him. The moment Dabholkar alighted from the tonga, *Tatyasaheb* Noolkar returned from the mosque (*Dwarkamai*) and said that Baba was at the corner of Sathewada, and suggested to Dabholkar to go for '*dhool bhet*' first and after having a bath, have a leisure *darshan*. Hearing this, Dabholkar ran and prostrated in front of Baba, right there in the dust! He experienced bliss. All his senses were satiated. The experience is more divine than he had thought possible, when *Nanasaheb* had described Baba. He felt, he got a new lease of life. He felt with Baba's *darshan*, one's thoughts change, the force of previous

karmas (actions) starts abating and gradually a non-attachment to the worldly things starts growing. He felt that those who had spurred him for this divine meeting were his true kin and he felt that he was forever indebted to them. He was so taken in by the *darshan* that he started seeing the world as Sai's form.

On his first day in Shiridi, a strong argument ensued between him and *Balasaheb* Bhate. Dabholkar contended, "Why should one have a *Guru* ? Why should we lose our freedom and subjugate ourselves to others ? When we have to do our own duties, why a *Guru* is needed ? What can a *Guru* do to someone, who is not making any efforts and is idling ?" Bhate stuck to the opposite viewpoint. He said, "Man proposes, but it is God Who disposes. How can you fight fate ? Leave aside your cleverness !" Dabholkar says that his ego wouldn't let him accept defeat. So, the argument stretched to three quarter of an hour. The only net gain of the heated argument was the loss of his peace of mind. Then, it dawned upon him that unless there is strong body - consciousness and egoism, there would be no discussion.

After this debate, when *Annasaheb* reached the mosque with the others, Baba asked *Kakasaheb*, while looking pointedly at Dabholkar, "What was going on in the *wada* ? What was the dispute about ? And what was this 'Hemadpant' saying ?" The distance between the *wada* and the mosque is considerable; how did then Baba come to know of this incident. Dabholkar realised, Baba is Omnipresent. He started pondering as to, why Baba must have called him 'Hemadpant'. Hemadri was a well-known minister of king Mahadev and Ramaraja of Yadav dynasty. He was the author of 'Dharmashastra'. He had also written a book 'Chaturvarga - Chintamani'. Hemadri-pant of Sanskrit became Hemadpant of Marathi language. Dabholkar contemplated that there was no similarity between Hemadri and himself. He pondered, 'His *gotra* (line of descent) was from 'Vatsa', whereas mine from 'Bharadwaj'; his *pravara* (lineage) has five exalted persons, whereas mine has three. He was Yajurvedi, and I Rigvedi. He was learned in *Dharmashastra*, was a shrewd statesman, and could compose verses in Sanskrit, whereas I am totally incompetent in these areas.'

Then, it dawned on him that this title by Baba was to shatter his ego and the resultant contentious nature. He realised that there should be no desire to vie or argue with others, but to be forever humble. Only 'Shraddha' (faith with courage) and 'Saburi' (patience) can help us in our spiritual progress. Since the title came from Baba's lips he accepted it as an ornament. He felt that even Shri Ram and Shri Krishna, God incarnate themselves held on to their *Guru's* feet. So, in comparison, who was I ? And finally he concluded, there can be no knowledge without *Guru* and hence no salvation.

In 1911, one fine morning, when Dabholkar went to the mosque, he saw Baba grinding wheat at the hand-mill. Immediately the news spread in the village and men and women flocked to the mosque.

Four bold women pushing their way through the crowd took hold of the peg forcibly from Baba's hands and started grinding and singing Baba's *leelas*. When all the wheat was ground, the women thought, 'Baba does not have any dependents, moreover, He subsists on alms, why does He need the flour ? Baba is Compassion Incarnate; He will give away all this flour to us.' So, they started sharing it. Baba, Who was quiet till now, got enraged and asked, "Whose father's property you are looting ?" He asked them to throw the flour on the village outskirts. The women fretted and were ashamed at their greediness; they threw the flour as directed by Baba.

At first no one understood Baba's intention. But, later realised that it was not flour but the raging cholera epidemic, that was crushed and banished from the village.

When Dabholkar saw this *leela* of Baba, he was filled with a divine joy and felt that he should sing Baba's *leelas* to his heart's content, which became the inspiration for penning the 'Shri Sai Satcharita'.

God assigns some to build temples, *ashrams* or *ghats* on riverbanks; others to do *kirtans* and some He sends to pilgrimages. But, He bade Dabholkar to write about Him. He was unable to comprehend, why He assigned him this task, as he considered himself to be 'Jack of all trades, and master of none'. He felt, he did not have the requisite qualities to accomplish the task of writing on Him. He was caught in a situation, where if he did not make an effort, it would tantamount to disobedience and if he obeyed the command, he was not worthy of the task. He thought, 'How can I describe the inner self of Baba ? I do not have the intellectual capacity to fathom His greatness.'

Hemadpant was 60 years old and was skeptical, whether he would be able to write on Baba's life; so he wanted to seek Baba's blessings to accomplish the task. On his behalf Shama told Baba, "This *Annasaheb* wishes to write Your biography; don't say You are a Poor *Fakir* and there is no need to write it. But, if You agree and help him, Your Feet (Grace) will accomplish the task."

Baba was moved and placed His Boon Bestowing Hand on Dabholkar's head and gave him *Udi* as *prasad*. The Omniscient Baba wanted to calm his agitated mind; so He said,

"Make a collection of My stories, experiences, conversations, etc. He should subdue his ego and offer it at My Feet. He who does so, will get not only My help in writing the book but I will be there to assist him forever, in every way."

"I shall Myself write My own story, and he will become My instrument. Listen to My stories with reverence, narrate them to others in *keertan*, and meditate upon them ! This will give rise to love and devotion, which will

instantly destroy ignorance. Where there is faith and devotion, I remain enslaved forever; but otherwise, I am unattainable.”

“When these stories are heard with devotion, the devotees will experience constant bliss and Self Realisation. Where disputes and arguments prevail, *maya* and ignorance abound, thus eluding Self Knowledge, hence he remains unhappy on earth and even in heaven.”

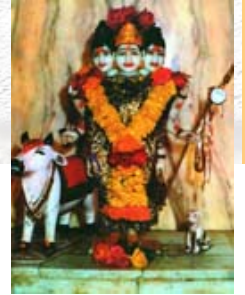
Dabholkar thought, there are several works on Baba by other devotees like Das Ganu, Savitribai Raghunath Tendulkar, Amidas Bhavani Mehta, etc., then, why one more book on Baba. But, then he felt that Baba’s life is as wide and deep as a boundless ocean and all can dive deep into the same and take out precious gems of knowledge and devotion and distribute them to others.

Dabholkar started writing in 1922-23 and wrote for six years (1929) under the divine inspiration of Baba. Dabholkar writes - “When I myself start to write anything, I cannot compose a few words or sentences; but when He of His own accord makes me write, I go on writing..... and there is no end to it.”

The ‘Shri Sai Satcharita’ is published by Shirdi Sai Sansthan and currently is into its 24th edition. The first edition in Marathi, having approximately 900 pages, in vertical size of 8’x5.5’, at price Rs. 3/-, was released on November 26, 1930. Later it was translated verse to verse in Gujarati, Telugu, Kannad. Adapted versions are available in English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannad, Urdu, Gujarati, Sindhi, Bengali, etc. Millions of copies of the ‘**Shri Sai Satcharita**’ have been sold.

– Shamshad Ali Baig

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Mainpage



शुद्धा

सबुटी

SHRI SAIBABA SANSTHAN TRUST, SHIRDI



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SaiLeela Nov-Dec 2005

'Shri Sai Satcharita' The Ocean Of Sai's Stories

Sai has had all His wishes fulfilled. Sai is the adornment of all the saints. Sai is the refuge of His devotees and the destroyer of difficulties of the whirlpool of life.

"Samartha Sai" ! With this 'mantra', for those who serve at His Holy Feet, He moves the strings for the deliverance of His devotees from worldly existence. Sacred is His life story.

Therefore, Sai *Samartha Sadguru*, by becoming the ship for crossing the ocean of existence, will take us all, who have taken refuge in Him, to the other bank.

This ocean of existence is extremely insurmountable. Make Sai's Feet your boat, which will take us across to the other bank, without fear. Observe the miracle of faith !

By observing such a vow, one does not experience the acute pain of worldly existence. There is no other gain better than this. This itself is the strength, that stands us in good stead.

The experiences, that Baba's devotees had, when He was in body, have been published in 'Sai Leela'. Baba got this book written, so that they could recollect them.

'Sai Leela' is supremely pure and holy. In it, the 'Satcharita' has been published in a serial form, chapter after chapter. Read this as the biography of your own *Guru (Gurucharitra)* ! It will awaken you and give you advice relating to this and the other world.

In the case of some *Gurus*, they narrate their own fame to their disciples. After they leave their bodies, an inspiration arises to write a book about them.

When Sai narrated stories of different kinds, they were deep and profound. The listeners became deeply engrossed and forgot their hunger and thirst.

Those who have seen Sai with their own eyes have had their three-fold miseries destroyed. He, Whose power was such, how can He be described in detail ?

Such a Sai, Who was famous for His magnanimity, got this biography of His fame written down for the upliftment of those who were devoted to Him.

After bathing in the holy Godavari and taking *darshan* of Baba's *Samadhi*, listen to this Satcharita ! The three-fold afflictions will be quelled.

Just casually telling the stories about Him leads one to unknowingly embrace spirituality. But, when you glance at this book, a multitude of sins will be destroyed.

Those who desire to end the cycle of birth and death, this wearisome coming and going, should enjoin themselves to the *Guru*'s feet and constantly remember and chant his name with devotion.

Inadvertence is the cause of illusory knowledge. Inattention to the form of the *Atman* leads to the endless cycle of birth and death, and is the root cause for the ultimate destruction.

Greed means illusory knowledge. What is not *Atman* such as the body, mind, senses and to have pride in that, is called death by the wise, after due consideration.

If the ocean of Sai stories is churned, then the narration of Sai's stories will be sweet and newer nuances will always surface. The downfall of the listeners will be averted.

Those who had seen Baba, but whose eyes were not satiated, for them, listening to the glories of Baba would be a purification and merito-rious.

Whoever is fortunate to have the desire to read (this book), he will have happiness, bliss and contentment.

Listening to the stories told by Baba, they will forget their bodily ailments. And if they concentrate and dwell upon them, liberation from bondage will follow naturally.

The unique presentation of His stories, as also the apt choice of words, would completely absorb the listeners in Him and all would experience perfect bliss.

Just as the ears are keen to listen to the stories, or the eyes are ready to get a '*darshan*', similarly the mind should be eager to concentrate and get easily absorbed in divine contemplation.

Only those who have good deeds to their credit from their past births will listen to these stories. If someone feels sleepy, God will wake him up.

Those who are uncontrollably engaged in worldly pleasures and who become abject, when these are denied to them, for them the nectar of the stories of the saints will free them from these vices.

Performing *yoga* and sacrifices, practising meditation and concentration requires great efforts, whereas listening to these tales requires no efforts other than attentiveness.

Let the devout and virtuous listeners listen to this pure story of Sai, by which they will be benefitted; because the powerful five sins will be burnt completely.

Chained as we are to the worldly existence, which conceals from our view the Real Self, we will find that by listening to these stories, the bonds will be loosened; and we will get back the original state or Real Self.

These tales should be remembered throughout life and studied daily. They will free the listeners from worldly affairs and bring peace to all.

In brief, holy is the story of Sai. The hearts will be purified of those who recite and those who listen.

Listening to the stories with love will dispel all worldly afflictions. Sai, the cloud of mercy, will shower grace; and complete and pure knowledge will appear.

Sloth, a wandering mind, attachment to sense-objects and indulgence of the palate - these are the obstacles, which come in the way of listening. Steer clear of these and the listening will become a happy experience.

You do not need ceremonies to complete the rituals, you do not need fasting to torture the body, you do not need to visit the *tirthas*. It is sufficient to listen to the story.

Genuine love and awareness of the core of devotion will easily lead to the attainment of the highest good; and incorrect knowledge and the knowledge of the two-fold nature will be destroyed.

You need not make efforts for other means. Let us listen to the Saicharita ! It will exhaust all *karmas*, of the past and the present life, which results in rebirth. Not the least effect will remain of them.

This being the life story of a saint, it is naturally pleasing, in all respects. The eating habits of saints, their everyday behaviour and even their casual remarks are enchanting.

This is not a life-sketch or biography. Sai *Maharaj*, the cloud of mercy, showered this because of His love for His devotees, as a means of remembering Him and obtaining bliss.

Such are the stories of these great saints, who talk about the worldly life, but place one on the path of salvation. The stories deal with material and spiritual life at the same time.

This must have been their underlying purpose, that one should lead a happy life; but should always be careful and thus this body should be fruitfully utilised.

Those who do listen to the stories of Sai with love, they will be effortlessly benefitted. Their devotion at Sai's Feet will increase and they will obtain happiness and prosperity.

This collection of stories will remind those who are full of affection for Sai, of His Lotus Feet, at every step.

It describes that, which is impossible to put into words; and that, which is beyond the senses, it makes possible to enjoy. However, much you may drink this nectar in the form of these stories, it is difficult to be fully satisfied.

The deeds of saints are impossible to comprehend. Their glories are beyond description. Who is capable of fully putting them in words ?

If these stories are regularly heard, Sai's image will perpetually remain before our eyes, our minds and our hearts; and we will remember Him and meditate upon Him day and night.

One would perceive Him while waking or dreaming, while sitting, resting or eating. Wherever one goes about, either in society or in the jungle, He would seem to be walking beside him.

If thus He is with us day and night, one would be absorbed in divine contemplation; and when this happens everyday, the mind will be one with the Supreme Energy.

One may eat the '*shira-puri*' of faith and devotion, as much as one can, but one will never be satisfied even if one eats till one is gorged.

If you partake of this nectar in the form of the life story with patience and faith, loving devotion will spring within you and the listeners will be gratified.

The devotees will easily achieve the Supreme State of existence. The listeners will be full of devotion and freedom from attachment. For those, full of faith, they will receive happiness and peace; and for all, in general, contentment.

Listening to these stories from the mouth of the *Guru* will eradicate the troubles and anxieties pertaining to the world. Bliss will be born in the minds of the listeners and knowledge of the soul will dawn upon them.

Whether the Baba's words may or may not be uttered jokingly, they could never be meaningless; because in every word, that Baba spoke, there was a store of profound meaning.

Whatever Baba said, these were not mere words, but the seals of destiny. Not one word would ever be futile. It would accomplish its task at the proper time.

Listening to these interesting stories, makes an impression and stamps upon the mind the *Guru*'s words. The doership of all acts - good, bad - or non-action - will disappear. Faith will be established at the *Guru*'s Feet.

The fear of the worldly existence is very great. It is *maya* that is responsible for this insurgence. By listening to the stories, it will be annihilated and give permanent happiness.

This Saicharita is like drinking nectar. Listen to it attentively, concentrating on the Feet of the *Guru* ! Hear the continuation with attention !

Therefore, with full concentration, oh listeners, listen to the explanation with faith ! By listening to the Sai Satcharita, let your mind be inclined towards devotion.

Along with the narration, you will feel contented. Your wayward mind will find peace. Agitation will disappear and you will achieve happiness.

Hail, hail to Thee, Sai *Sadguru* ! Hail, hail to Thee, the Wish-fulfilling Tree, which grants absorption into the essence of *Brahman* ! Hail, hail to Thee, the Ocean of Self-knowledge ! Create in us respect for the story.

That You made us drink the nectar of Your life story and awakened us from our slumber, is due to Your grace. Isn't this something extraordinary ?

May the devotees enjoy the nectar of Your story as the Chatak (bird) savours the rain drops from the clouds. May all Your devotees savour them and be happy always.

Let the devotees, as they hear Your pure story, break out in perspiration all over their bodies, fill their eyes with tears of love, and have their breath caught in their throats.

Let the listeners and their families be overcome with emotion, have horripilation, and cry and sob often.

Let their hostilities and their differences, small and great, vanish. Let them realise that this is a sign of the grace of the *Guru* dawning upon them.

It seems as if Sai Himself is playing the part of the great characters in these books; and the narrator and the listeners see Sai's image before them, every time.

He, Who is the highest form of well-being is that Sai - the store of all attributes ! He is fortunate, who hears about Him and speaks of His glories, being an act of religious merit, his life being purifying.

Sai Himself narrates this story. He is the reader and the listener. He is the writer and the One Who gets it written. It is He, Who makes it comprehensible.

Sai Himself is the actor in this story, it is He, Who is the sweetness in the story, it is He, Who is the listener and the narrator and it is He, Who enjoys its bliss.

Then, the privilege and pleasure of listening to this story, can it not help in attaining spirituality ? Those devotees are fortunate, who appreciate and enjoy it.

Listeners are like thirsty 'Chatak' birds. Sai *Samartha* is the Cloud of Self-contentment, Who pours showers in the form of His life story to quench the thirst.

In reality, Sai Himself manifests in the form of the narration of the life story and the inspiration. But, is He different from the listeners ? Nay, the listener is also not separate from Sai !

Seemingly, it appears like a simple biography. But, this whole drama is played by Sai. He Himself becomes the actor and lovingly stages the powerful drama.

This is not a simple story, but a treasure trove of joy. It is the best, nectar like sweet meat for one's self, which should be enjoyed with faith and devotion, by one who is exceptionally happy.

Wonderous and great is *Guru*'s grace. His greatness should always be remembered by us. Therefore, He has served the devotees by toiling over this book for their pleasure.

This is not a story, but 'Somakant', from which the stories of Sai ooze like nectar from the moon, which the thirsty devotees, like the Chakor, may drink to their fill.

The path of the Satcharita is simple. Wherever it is read, it becomes *Dwarkamai* and Sai definitely appears there.

There itself are the banks of the Godavari, there itself is the nearby pilgrimage place of Shirdi; there itself is Sai together with the *Dhuni*, Who removes all difficulties, as soon as He is remembered.

Where the Sai Charita is regularly recited, Sai resides there always. If the 'Charita' is repeatedly read with full faith, it pleases Him, in all respects.

Whatever is missing or additional in the stories, believe that everything is inspired by Sai and read the Sai Satcharita without finding faults !

This is not a story, but a drink of eternal bliss, which increases the thirst for more. To pacify that thirst, another story will follow.

The listeners will be pleased on hearing that, it destroys the distress of this mundane existence and grants a state of happiness.

One who is fortunate enough to desire his own well-being, he should be ready to listen with reverence to the narration of Sai's stories.

We do not need the scriptures. Just this one religious work on Sai is enough. Irrespective of the number of sins committed, He is our protector from all the difficulties.

If it is not possible to read consistently the entire book, just concentrate and fill your heart with the chapters on devotion to the *Guru* ! Listen to them everyday as a rule !

Read this biography regularly at any time of the day ! *Shri* Hari together with your *Gururaj*, will certainly meet His devotee.

Goddess Lakshmi will permanently abide in the home, where it is read regularly. At least if one week's reading of the whole book is done, poverty will be driven away.

Sai, Who is the treasure house of all virtues, is the grantor of liberation to His devotees. His stories destroy all the sins of *Kaliyug*. Listeners should hear them.

The bliss of heaven is a mere trifle compared with the story of such a saint. Who would ever care to raise his head and look there, leaving aside the prompt benefit of this true story.

On hearing the Saicharita, the listeners and the narrator are both purified; the ears of the listeners are purified and so also the mouth of the narrator.

Whosoever reads this book within seven consecutive days, with love and faith, after proper ablutions, his calamities will be removed.

This book is woven with the threads of spirituality; it is full of stories of Krishna and the *Brahman*; it abounds with the essence or nectar of the unity of *Brahman* and *Atman* and it overflows with the unparalleled joy of non-duality.

This is Eknath's poetry, which is as pleasing as the garden of India. It is the *Vrindavan* of thirty-two parts (chapters). The wise and the ignorant savour this sweet and pleasing dish made from milk.

Listening to this Satcharita or reciting it regularly will result in the Feet of Sai *Samartha*, removing all the difficulties without any delay.

Those who are desiring wealth will get it; those who are upright in their conduct and dealings, will have complete renown. The results will depend upon their faith. Without devotion, you will not have the experience.

Reading the book with reverence, Sai *Samartha* is propitiated. He destroys ignorance and poverty and grants knowledge and untold prosperity.

This book was written due to an indication by Sai; and it was His secret desire. Blessed is that devotee, who is attached to His Feet.

One should make it a practice to read at least one chapter of this Satcharita everyday, with a calm and concentrated mind. It will bring immeasurable joy and happiness.

One who desires his own welfare should really read this book. He will be obliged by Sai, through all the cycles of life and he will remember Sai with overwhelming joy in birth after birth.

The book should definitely be read at one's own home on Sai's festivals, such as *Gurupournima*, *Gokul-ashtami*, *Punyatithi* and *Ramnavami*.

One's status in the next birth is determined by the desires of the mind in this one. The *shastras* also support the belief that one is born again according to one's tendencies at the time of death.

Shri Sai is the support of His devotees. Without Him the impediments in our way are not destroyed. What is the wonder in finding that the mother has tender feelings for her children ?

Yet, if one has an acute desire for liberation, then perform only virtuous deeds always. Practise the nine forms of devotion, including listening to His stories etc. and one will be purified from within.

By making Hemad the instrument He wrote His own life story for the upliftment of his innumerable devotees. Is this not an unparalleled deed ?

The book is a five-wick lamp, studded with gems to wave round the King among saints ! The chapters narrate the stories, which are wicks of oil, the light of which brings detachment and peace.

The book is *maya*, which entices the world. The chapters are arms, raised high, and the meaning of the stories are bracelets (worn on the upper arm) decorating the body, ready to embrace Sai, *Brahman* Incarnate.

The 'Sai Satcharita' is the universal sovereign amongst books. The chapters are pleasing, clever minstrels, narrating faith, knowledge, the *Vedantic* beauty and its vast glory.

The book is formidable as the span of the Ganges. The chapters are the compact '*ghats*' of just proportions. The flow of stories is sweet as nectar and vast, by the *Guru*'s grace and formidable greatness.

It is not just a book, but wish-fulfilling tree, which, the people engrossed in mundane existence, find barren, but for the seekers of liberation, it gives only the actual experience of liberation.

This alone can be called a real memorial, which destroys the darkness and tribulations of the mundane existence and saves from the hell of greed and illusion. It is certainly a giver of peace.

– Late Govind Raghunath Dabholkar

alias Hemadpant Translated in English by



Shri Sai Satcharita in Bengali, translated from Hindi, was recently released in the Sai *Samadhi Mandir* at Shirdi. Trustee Shri Ashok Khambekar, Executive Officer Shri Bhausaheb Wakchaure and translator of the Bengali book Smt. Sumona Bakechi were present on the occasion.

The ‘Shri Sai Satcharita’, originally written in Marathi by late Shri Raghunath Govind Dabholkar alias Hemadpant, with the blessings of Shri Sai Baba, was first published in book form in November 1930. Commemorating this year as the 75th year of the first edition, the Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust (Shirdi) appeals to all the Sai devotees, who have in their possession the copy of the said first edition, to come forward and give it to the Sansthan for digitizing. The Sansthan shall take every care to receive this copy of the sacred book, get it scanned and return it intact. All incidental expenses incurred in the process of securing the copy of the sacred book till they are returned after digitizing shall be borne by the Sansthan. The Sansthan appeals to all those in possession of the copy of the above cited first edition, to first send a requisition together with a copy of the inside title page. All those who respond to this appeal should furnish their names with complete postal address and superscribe the cover with 1st edition and all communications with regard to this sacred book should be sent to the Executive Officer, Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust (Shirdi), Shirdi - 423 109, Tal. Rahata, Dist. Ahmednagar, Maharashtra State.



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Mainpage



श्री

सबुली

SHRI SAIBABA SANSTHAN TRUST, SHIRDI



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SaiLeela Nov-Dec 2005

GAULIBUVA, ANANDNATH MAHARAJ,
CHANDBHAI PATEL

Several persons realised the greatness of *Shri Sai Baba* through intuition, and were attracted to Shirdi for the sake of His proximity. They spent some time with Baba and then proceeded with their onward journey.

GAULIBUVA

Gaulibuva was an ardent devotee of Pandurang of Pandhari. He used to undertake the pilgrimage of Shirdi every year. With him, there was always a disciple and a donkey. He used to spend eight months in each year at Pandhari. And, in the *Chaturmas* (a sacred period of four months, from Ashadh *Shuddha Ekadashi* to Kartik *Shuddha Ekadashi*), he used to put his camp on the banks of the river Ganga. At that time, he used to go for Baba's *darshan*. He saw Pandurang in Baba. Seeing Him, Gaulibuva used to say, "He is my Pandurang personified. He is the saviour of the destitute ! Can a person become a saint by wearing a silken *dhoti* ? For that, it is necessary to spend your blood and body. This world is mad. It runs after useless things and persons. Can a person become God without deserving it ?"

Gaulibuva's these sincere words give us an indication of his true feelings. He used to caution people, "He is the Incarnation of *Parabrahma*. Don't let Him go away from your hands."

At that time his age was around 95 years.

ANANDNATH MAHARAJ

This great saint was a disciple from the *Shishya-parampara* of *Shri Akkalkot Swami*.

This famous Anandnath *Maharaj* has his *math* at village Savargaon, 6 kilometers from the town of Yevala (on the Kopargaon - Manmad rail track). He used to reside at the *math*. Like other saints, he used to come to Shirdi frequently to meet Baba. He had foretold about Baba that, "He will do great work."

Once Madhavrao Deshpande, Nandram Marvadi, Bhagchand Marvadi and Dagdubhau Gayke - all villagers from Shirdi - had gone to take *darshan* of Anandnath *Maharaj*. All of them sat in the bullock-cart and began their return journey. Suddenly, Anandnath *Maharaj* came running, sat down in the cart saying, "I want to come to Shirdi" and accompanied them.

In this context, while narrating his experience, Madhavrao Deshpande says,

"When we went to him at Yevala, he was 95 years old. He used to wear only a loincloth. He was a man with a great divine vision. When we returned from him, he accompanied us to Shirdi to meet Sai Baba. His and Baba's eyes met. However, both of them did not utter a single word. Thereafter, Anandnath *Maharaj* said to us, 'He is a real diamond ! Even though He is now lying in a dump yard, He is not a flint-stone. Keep my these words in your mind. You will definitely remember them later on.' Saying this, he returned to Yevala."

The life of Anandnath *Maharaj* is very strange. Akkalkot *Swami*'s devotee late Ganesh Ballal Mulekar had stayed in the company of *Shri Swami*. He wrote a book, entitled '*Shri Akkalkot-nivasi Shri Swami Maharaj yanche Charitra*'. In his book, there is more information about *Shri Anandnath Maharaj*. It is as follows :-

Shri Anandnath Maharaj was originally a resident of Walawal in Konkan and was a Kudal-*Deshkar Brahmin*. His surname was Walawalkar. He used to trade in a root, named '*Harda*', having medicinal properties. Once, while visiting Mumbai, he came to the firm of Shri Bhende. There, he came to know that, at village Akkalkot, there is a person **Who is an Incarnation of Guru Dev Dattatreya**. He

immediately started for Akkalkot. After reaching there, he stepped into a pond, under a tree of *Vad* (a sacred tree), to wash his feet. Suddenly, a twig of *Vad* fell on his head. When he looked up, he saw a divine vision of *Maharaj* and was thus blessed.

There and then, Anandnath became a *Bairagi* (renounced the worldly things of life). After that, he stayed at Akkalkot for six years. He got an inspiration and composed a *bhajan*, full of *bhakti-ras*. He always used to sing it before *Maharaj*. He always used to move in *Digambar dasha* (sans clothes). Thereafter, *Maharaj* directed him to move out of Akkalkot. Anandnath *Maharaj* asked for *prasad* from *Maharaj*. *Poorna-brahma sakshat Paramatma Shri Akkalkot Maharaj* was very much pleased and *Atma Padukas* emerged from His mouth and gave them to Anandnath *Maharaj*. These *Padukas* are miniature - about half inch in size. In it, there is a *darshan* of *Shri*. Even though they are small in size, each and every line of *Shri's Padukas* is visible. Till now, no one is able to identify the material, from which the *Padukas* are made. For taking the *darshan* of these *Padukas*, people from different villages arrive.

Anandnath *Maharaj* established three *maths*. First one is at Yevale. Second one is in Sawantwadi state at Hodawade. Third one is in Vengurle camp at a place, known as Dhawade. This place is near town Vengurle itself, but is secluded and scenic. Many of the devotees of *Shri Akkalkot Swami Maharaj* come there for the *darshan*. The *Atma Padukas*, referred above, are also in this *math*. All the three *maths* are in good condition.

Shri Anandnath Maharaj has created substantial literature on *Shri*. It includes *bhupalis*, *bhajans*, *shlokas*, *aaratis* etc. A major portion of his writings are yet to be published. At the Vengurle *math*, every morning *bhupali*, *bhajan*, *shloka*, *aarati* etc., composed by Anandnath *Maharaj*, are sung. Similarly, at night, *Pooja*, *bhajan*, *Shejarati* etc., composed by him, are rendered. Every year, *Datta-jayanti*, Birth and Death Anniversaries of *Swami*, *Guru-pratipada*, *Guru-dwadashi* etc. are observed in the *math*. Earlier, on the *Swami-jayanti*, there was an 'open door' policy. On that day, the villagers were made to sit on the roads of the town and gave invitations in advance to the *Bhandara*. The very large crowd gathering there, was provided with food (*Anna-shanti*). Now also, the programme is conducted on more or less same scale.

The manner of living of *Shri Anandnath Maharaj* was not like that of a common man. He used to live in a grand style. He had a retinue of several servants, cooks, cows, buffalos, bullocks, vehicles etc. He had also kept a very costly mare for his *math*. On the whole, during his lifetime, the *math* was maintained with great fanfare.

With the blessings of *Shri*, Anandnath *Maharaj* had possessed certain *siddhis* (miraculous powers). With their help, he had cured countless patients of their diseases. He was also blessed with *wak-siddhi* (miraculous power of speaking). With it, he looked after the welfare of many.

This Anandnath *Maharaj* took a live *Samadhi* (live burial) at Vengurle in the year 1904 (*Jeshtha Shuddha 6, Shake 1825*). He was cremated near the *math*. His *Padukas* have been also installed there.

He was popularly known as 'Anandbuva' in the village Akkalkot.

CHANDBHAI PATEL

Chandbhai was a Village Officer of Dhup-khed village. This village is in Paithan taluka in Aurangabad district at a distance of about 15 kilometers from Aurangabad on the road going to Ajantha.

Baba came to reside permanently at Shirdi – making this fortunate Muslim as the reason. This well-to-do Muslim, Patil of his village, was once travelling to Aurangabad and lost his mare. Two months passed away and still there was no trace of the mare. Ultimately, with great disappointment, he started on his return journey. After he covered a distance of around four and half kms. (approximately 9 miles) from Aurangabad, he spotted a young boy, sitting under a mango tree. The boy – dressed as a *fakir* – called out to him and asked him to smoke *chillum* and proceed further. The *fakir* - clad in a *kafni* and holding a *satka* (staff) under his shoulder – was making preparations for smoking a *chillum*. Seeing that Chandbhai was carrying a horse saddle on his shoulder, he enquired, "What is this saddle for?" Then, Chandbhai narrated a story of loss of his mare. The *fakir* pointed out in the direction of a nearby *nullah* (stream) and said, "Go ! You will find your mare there." And really, Chandbhai found his mare at that place. He was amazed. He immediately realised that, this boy is not an ordinary person and he must be an *auliya* (an unique person). He brought his mare to the *fakir*. The *fakir* asked him to sit near him. Then, the *fakir* picked-up pliers, with his own hands he embedded it in the ground, took out a burning ember and placed it in his *chillum*. When he found that water was needed to make the *chhapi* (a piece of cloth required to cover the *chillum*), he banged his *satka* on the ground and brought out water. He wetted the *chhapi* in the water, squeezed out extra water from it and wrapped it around the *chillum*. He smoked the lighted *chillum* and offered it to Chandbhai.

Seeing all this, Chandbhai flabbergasted. The Patil naturally felt that, he should take this *fakir* to bless his home. On the insistence of Chandbhai, the *fakir* went to his house either that day or the next day. He stayed there for some time and went once again to Shirdi along with the wedding procession of Chandbhai's relative.

Chandbhai did not have issue of his own. His wife's nephew's marriage was arranged with a girl, named 'Wajirbi' from Shirdi. For this marriage, Chandbhai's family and friends were going on horsebacks and carts. With this entourage, Baba was also travelling in a bullock-cart.

After reaching Shirdi, the procession put a camp in the ground, in front of the Khandoba temple. This temple was owned by a *sonar* (goldsmith) Bhagat Mhalsapati. Seeing the cute looking child *fakir*, getting down from the bullock-cart, Mhalsapati spontaneously uttered, "Aao Sai (Welcome Sai) !" . And the *fakir* came to be known by that name thereafter.

The story of Chandbhai's mare was told by Chandbhai himself to Ramgeerbuva of Shirdi ('Bapugeer' as called by Sai Baba). Later on, in the year 1936, Ramgeerbuva narrated it to Narsinha *Swami*, in an interview taken by the latter. At that time, Ramgeerbuva's age was 76.

It is said that Baba appeared in the dreams of Chandbhai and found out his thoughts.

– Translated from original Marathi into English by [Sudhir](#)



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